

DEATHS.

Dr. Charles Everett Vaughan died at his residence in Santa Barbara on June 24th. Dr. Vaughan graduated at Harvard in 1863, and came to California in 1896, and had lived in Santa Barbara for some time. He was a member of the Santa Barbara County Medical Society.

Dr. Frank H. Payne, University avenue, Berkeley, died August 8th, aged 54 years. Dr. Payne graduated at Rush in 1874, coming almost at once to California. For twenty-seven years Dr. Payne had practiced continuously in the college town, going to Berkeley one year before it was incorporated, and was for several years the only physician in the place. During his residence he served for many years as Health Officer without pay. He was a member of his County Medical Society, a prominent Mason, and a member of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco.

THE NOSTRUM, THE FOE OF RATIONAL MEDICINE.

Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, in an interview in the *Druggists' Circular*, says:

"The foes of rational medicine at the present time are, first, the quack, a man possessing possibly high medical training and skill, but unfortunately devoid of those principles of ethics without which the honorable practice of a profession is impossible; second, the charlatan, a man necessarily devoid of any medical training or ability, who plays upon the feelings of his patients and administers nostrums of no value and applied with no science. The third foe of rational medicine is the impersonal physician, namely, the nostrum, the patent medicine and the proprietary remedy. It is appalling to think of the thousands and thousands of our fellow citizens who pin their faith to these alleged remedies. Some of them have value; they are, in fact, often the very remedies which are described in the *materia medica* and the *pharmacopœia* and administered by physicians, but distributed as they are, with absurd claims of efficiency, taken as they are without the advice or consent of a physician, they become not only one of the greatest foes of rational medicine, but one of the greatest dangers to the public at large."

This third foe of our profession—the nostrum—the "patent medicine"—the proprietary with the unknown formula—is one that so many of us are cherishing, excusing, using, promoting, prescribing and generally helping along in the sad work of undermining the medical profession. What is the actual difference, so far as the ethical and professional facts of the case are concerned, between Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound or Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, and the following "proprietarys," selected at random from the *ical Association, American Medicine*, and the *New York Medical Journal*: Antikamnia, arsenauero, antiphlogistine, pepto-mangan, Kutnow's powder, neurosine, unguentine, chionia, Eskay's food, manola, marigol, lythol, uriseptin, and our dear old friend—"California syrup of figs"?

THE POSTOFFICE AND FRAUDULENT MEDICINES.

The *Druggists' Circular* for July devotes considerable space to the subject of nostrums and the attitude of the Postoffice toward them; alcohol in nostrums, etc. An interview with the assistant attorney-general for the Postoffice is significant. We quote a portion of it:

"I should like to disabuse the public mind of the impression that the department has undertaken a campaign or crusade of any kind against anything or anybody. We have taken up individual cases as they have been presented to us, usually by persons who have complained that they had been defrauded

through the purchase of worthless remedies. As the law on the subject of the use of the mails for fraudulent purposes, either through newspaper advertising or circulars, is very clear and specific, we have in each case made a careful examination; and where analysis has shown the so-called medicines to be absolutely worthless we have issued fraud orders. During my own incumbency in office I have not paid special attention to the question of obscene advertising matter to which the department's published statement refers, although I believe my predecessor went into that phase of the subject very thoroughly. As a matter of fact, I think it will be found that where the advertising matter is of an objectionable character, the so-called remedies which are advertised are practically worthless, and therefore fraudulent; hence by issuing fraud orders against manufacturers or sellers of these goods we at the same time abolish their literature from the newspapers and from the mails."

STARVATION FEES IN ENGLAND.

An action at law tried within the last few days in the High Court of Justice throws a lurid light on the fierce struggle for life which is the lot of medical men practicing in the poor districts of London. It was stated in evidence that there are doctors who will give advice and medicine for twopence, if the patient calls on them; if the doctor has to visit the patient the charge is fivepence! Sixpence a visit with medicine thrown in is a comparatively high fee. There are doctors who will attend a patient at his own home and supply him with physic for an inclusive charge of three shillings and sixpence a week. And these are not starving young doctors who, like a man whom I knew, keep themselves alive through the winter by drinking codliver oil in their own dispensaries, but prosperous traders who drive about in carriages. It is likely enough that the advice and the physic in many cases are together not worth more than the twopence at which the vendor values them, but the wonder remains how a man can make a living on such a scale of fees. Can it be wondered at that the medical profession does not stand very high in public opinion when its own members rate their services so low?—*Medical News*.

"SCIENCE" OF OSTEOPATHY.

In April, 1902, the so-called "National School of Osteopathy" offered "Our full mail course in osteopathy, bound in five parts, examination papers and degree of D. O., for \$10, instead of \$25." The circular goes on to say:

"To compensate ourselves, however, for this reduction of price, we must withdraw the offer of the anatomic chart and books on anatomy and physiology which we offer to our \$25 students. However, as these latter works are not essential to your success as an osteopath, you will probably be much better pleased with this \$10 offer. There will be no further reduction in the cost of our course at any time. We do not find that any of our students are unable to pass our examinations, because our instruction is so plain."

And these are the people that some of our state legislatures are licensing, and for whom some of our noted writers appear before legislators to advocate the issuing of such licenses.

According to Dr. Hiss, of Chicago, the annual sale of "patent" medicines in the United States must reach the enormous sum of \$60,000,000, and a large portion of this does positive harm. It is stated that one of our smaller middle western cities alone turns out 21,000,000 barrels of patent medicines per year, and in France they even have slot machines for vending patent medicines.—Dr. O. T. Osborne, Address, A. M. A.